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HOW HOME DEMONSTRATION CLUB MEMBERS SERVE THEIR COMMUNITIES
THROUGH COOPERATIVE EFFORT

A radio talk by Miss Gladys Gallup, Extension Service, broadcast Wednesday, May 4, 1938, in the Home Demonstration program, National Farm and Home Hour, by 90 stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company.

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MORSE SALISBURY:

Miss Gallup, I'm sure you have a special interest in what Miss Wilder has said, since your work takes you to South Dakota.

GLADYS GALLUP:

Yes, I was interested especially when she said their problems out there weren't so different, it's what they've done about them.

I was thinking that the problems we have in all the States are much the same after all - how to make a living, how to keep well, how to live with others. And as she says, the thing that counts is how we meet these problems. Of course, you can't meet them unless you know what they are.

Then, I was thinking of the one million (996,153) home demonstration club members in forty-two thousand clubs (42,778). These women are familiarizing themselves with conditions in their own communities and they are meeting their problems through cooperative effort. I mean through such things as serving hot dishes or hot school lunches, such as Miss Wilder mentioned, not only in South Dakota, but in fourteen thousand (14,748) schools throughout our country.

The members of the home demonstration clubs in seven thousand (7,896) communities have established health clinics where children can go to have their teeth and tonsils taken care of. In four thousand communities (4,929) they have improved school or community play grounds. They have installed play equipment such as swings, slides, and sand boxes. As for their own homes, they not only have improved the appearance of the buildings and yards, but have planted shrubbery and flowers along the roadsides.

I am reminded of the women in a community in Maryland, in Ann Arundel County. A year ago, the theme for one of their spring club meetings was, "The Passer-by Judges Your Character by the Outside of Your House." From the meeting the members went home and viewed their houses and lawns as a stranger would. They saw ugly weed patches and heaps of ashes, broken bottles and old pots and pans. This critical examination started a community campaign of cleaning, painting, and planting.

There was a bungalow in the community, built for some years. There were mounds of earth left from the excavation of the cellar and scattered stones about. Tin cans had accumulated. Weeds had grown up. After the meetings on home surroundings, with community interest and pride, the owner of the house had the ground graded, fertilized, and planted to shrubbery, annuals, and roses.

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The club members exchanged seeds, plants, and cuttings. Those who couldn't afford to buy shrubbery searched their own wood lots for holly bushes, small cedars, and wild berry plants. In Anne Arundel County eleven different clubs improved their communities. They planted one hundred (107) flower gardens and more than one hundred and fifty (156) evergreen trees. No wonder Anne Arundel County is a lovely place to live.

One thing all home demonstration members feel a great need for is a central place where they can hold meetings, where they can have a place for work, where they can plan their programs. Just last year, over three hundred (372) different counties built more than seven hundred (787) community houses. Over two thousand (2,237) communities established work centers for canning, meat curing, and seed treatment.

One of these community houses was built in Oklahoma, in Cherokee County - the Mary Alan Industrial Arts Building. The members - there are 37 - come from the foothills of the Ozarks, where the land is poor and the homes are small.

One day the home demonstration agent, Miss Nan Rockwell, held a meeting on rug making. After that the women wanted to work together on rugs, but there was no place for them to meet. Certainly their homes were too small. They talked it over, and decided they'd have a community club house.

They built the house on land given them by the Presbyterian Board of Missions. Thirty-one men in the community donated their work and the pine logs for the cabin, and the women cooked the meals for the men when they were at work.

SALISBURY:

Just a minute, Miss Gallup - How big is the club house? You called it a cabin.

GALLUP:

Yes, I did; but it is fairly large - 48 by 36 feet - and it has 12 windows. It was completed in 31 days at a cost of only \$175. Mary Alan herself gave a stove, and Miss Rockwell, the home demonstration agent, supplied the pressure cookers. The women have used the building for a canning center, a community fair, and for their many demonstrations.

The club house has meant a lot to the people down there in Oklahoma. For their basket-making they have gathered, peeled, and dyed reeds. They prepared clay for pottery making. They cleaned materials for rugs and prepared the native dyes to color the rags for their rugs. They have rug frames and a spinning wheel. But most of all they have worked and played together, and the club house itself, in its lovely setting, is an incentive to community well-being.